

4.5 SIGN REGULATIONS

4.5.01. PURPOSE

These sign regulations are intended to appropriately limit the placement, type, size, and number of signs allowed within Old Town Newhall, and to require the proper maintenance of signs. The purposes of these limitations and requirements are to:

1. Avoid traffic safety hazards to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians, caused by visual distractions and obstructions;
2. Promote the aesthetic and environmental values of the community by providing for signs that do not impair the attractiveness of the City as a place to live, work, and shop;
3. Provide for signs as an effective channel of communication, while ensuring that signs are aesthetically proportioned in relation to adjacent structures and the structures to which they are attached; and
4. Safeguard and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.

4.5.02. APPLICABILITY

A. SIGNS REGULATED

These sign regulations apply to all signs in all Zones established by Section 4.2, except that directional/instructional signs and real estate signs shall instead comply with the requirements of UDC 17.51.080 (Sign Regulations Private Property).

B. APPLICABILITY TO SIGN CONTENT

The provisions of this Section do not regulate the message content of a sign (sign copy), regardless

of whether the message content is commercial or noncommercial.

C. SIGN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Sign installation within the areas subject to this Code shall require sign permit approval in compliance with UDC 17.51.080 (Sign Regulations Private Property).

D. SIGN VARIANCES AND HISTORIC SIGN DESIGNATION.

See UDC 17.24.110 (Administrative Sign Variance and Historic Sign Designation).

1. **Definitions.** Definitions of the specialized terms and phrases used in this Section are listed in UDC 17.51.080 (Sign Regulations Private Property).

4.5.03. RESERVED

4.5.04. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SIGNS

A. SIGN AREA AND HEIGHT MEASUREMENT

The measurement of sign area and height to determine compliance with the maximum sign area requirements and height limits of this Section shall comply with UDC 17.51.080 (Sign Regulations Private Property).

B. SIGN LOCATION REQUIREMENTS

Each sign shall be located in compliance with the following requirements, and all other applicable provisions of this Section.

1. **On-premise signs required.** Each sign shall be located on the same site as the subject of the sign, except as otherwise allowed by this Section.
2. **Setback requirements.** Each sign shall comply with the setback requirements of

the applicable zoning district, except for an approved projecting sign, and except for an approved freestanding sign, which shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the front and side street property lines.

- 3. Placement on a building.** No sign shall be placed so as to interfere with the operation of a door or window. Signs should not be located so that they cover prominent architectural features of the building.
- 4. Signs within a public right-of-way.** No sign shall be allowed in the public right-of-way except for the following:
 - a. A projecting or A-frame sign in compliance with Section 4.5.05 (Signs Standards by Zone);
 - b. Public signs erected by or on behalf of a governmental agency to convey public information, identify public property, post legal notices, or direct or regulate pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
 - c. Bus stop signs installed by a public transit company;
 - d. Informational signs of a public utility regarding its lines, pipes, poles, or other facilities; or
 - e. Emergency warning signs erected by a governmental agency, a public utility company, or a contractor doing authorized within the public right-of-way.

All signs within the public right-of-way that are

intended to regulate, warn, or guide traffic, shall comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Any sign installed or placed within the public right-of-way other than in compliance with this section shall be forfeited to the public and be subject to confiscation.

C. SIGN DESIGN

The following design criteria shall be used in reviewing the design of individual signs. Substantial conformance with each of the following design criteria shall be required before a sign permit or Building Permit can be approved.

- 1. Color.** Colors on signs and structural members should be harmonious with one another and relate to the dominant colors of the buildings on the site. Contrasting colors may be utilized if the overall effect of the sign is still compatible with building colors.
- 2. Design and construction.**
 - a. Except for banners, flags, temporary signs, and temporary window signs conforming with the requirements of this Section, each sign shall be constructed of permanent materials and shall be permanently attached to the ground, a building, or another structure by direct attachment to a rigid wall, frame, or structure.
 - b. Each permanent sign shall be designed by a professional (e.g., architect, building designer, landscape architect, interior designer, or others whose principal

business is the design, manufacture, or sale of signs), or who are capable of producing professional results.

- c. Each permanent sign shall be constructed by persons whose principal business is building construction or a related trade including sign manufacturing and installation, or others capable of producing professional results. The intent is to ensure public safety, achieve signs of careful construction, neat and readable copy, and durability, to reduce maintenance costs and prevent dilapidation.

3. Materials and structure.

- a. Sign materials (including framing and supports) shall be representative of the type and scale of materials used on the site where the sign is located. Sign materials shall match those used on the buildings on the site and any other signs on the site.
- b. No sign shall include reflective material.
- c. Materials for permanent signs shall be durable and capable of withstanding weathering over the life of the sign with reasonable maintenance.
- d. The size of the structural members (e.g. columns, crossbeams, and braces) shall be proportional to the sign panel they are supporting.

- e. The use of individual letters incorporated into the building design is encouraged, rather than a sign with background and framing other than the structure wall.

- 4. **Street address.** The City may require that a sign include the street address of the site, where it determines that public safety and emergency vehicle response would be more effectively served than if the street address were displayed solely on one or more buildings on the site.

- 5. **Copy design guidelines.** The City does not regulate the message content (copy) of signs; however, the following are principles of copy design and layout that can enhance the readability and attractiveness of signs. Copy design and layout consistent with these principles is encouraged, but not required.

- a. Sign copy should relate only to the name and/or nature of the business or commercial center.
- b. Permanent signs that advertise continuous sales, special prices, or include phone numbers, websites, etc., should be avoided.
- c. Information should be conveyed briefly or by logo, symbol, or other graphic manner. The intent should be to increase the readability of the sign and thereby enhance the identity of the business.
- d. The area of letters or symbols should not exceed 40 percent of the background area in commercial

districts or 60 percent in residential districts.

- e. Freestanding signs should contain the street address of the parcel or the range of addresses for a multi-tenant center.

6. Sign lighting. Sign lighting shall be designed to minimize light and glare on surrounding rights-of-way and properties.

- a. External light sources shall be directed and shielded so that they do not produce glare off the site, or illuminate any object other than the sign.
- b. Sign lighting shall not blink, flash, flutter, or change light intensity, brightness, or color.
- c. Colored lights shall not be used at a location or in a manner so as to be confused or construed as traffic control devices.
- d. Neither the direct nor reflected light from primary light sources shall create hazards for pedestrians or operators of motor vehicles.
- e. For energy conservation, light sources shall be hard-wired fluorescent or compact fluorescent lamps, or other lighting technology that is of equal or greater energy efficiency. Incandescent lamps are prohibited unless approved in writing by the Director of Community Development.

D. SIGN MAINTENANCE

1. Each sign and supporting hardware, including temporary signs and awning signs, shall be maintained in good repair and functioning properly at all times. Any damage to a sign or its illumination, including the failure of illumination shall be repaired within a maximum of 14 days from the date of damage or failure.
2. A repair to a sign shall be of materials and design of equal or better quality as the original sign.
3. A sign that is not properly maintained and is dilapidated shall be deemed a public nuisance, and may be abated in compliance with the Municipal Code.
4. When an existing sign is removed or replaced, all brackets, poles, and other supports that are no longer required shall be removed.

4.5.05. SIGN STANDARDS BY ZONE

Each sign shall comply with the regulations provided by this section and Table 4.5-1. An approved Sign Review (Enhanced Signage) or a Master Sign Program (Sign Program) may allow for additional signage opportunities that substantially conform to the spirit of Old Town Newhall sign standards. Refer to UDC 17.23.190 (Sign Review). All sign programs shall conform to the spirit and context of the OTNSP and shall be consistent with the adopted architectural styles and guidelines.

Table 4.5-1. Sign Standards by Zone

SIGN TYPE	SIZE ALLOWANCE	NUMBER, LOCATION, AND MATERIALS	ZONES			
			N	AE	COR	CB
A-Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height: Max. 36 inches. Area: Max. 7 square feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Placement shall be free and clear of all pedestrian paths of travel. Permitted during regular business hours subject to the approval an OTNSP sign application. Materials: Plastic signs are not allowed. Signs should be constructed primarily of wood, metal, or other non-plastic material and should be artistic in nature. Creative sign design is encouraged. 	X	p ¹	p ¹	Subject to UDC 17.51.080.
Awning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage height max. 66% of valance height. Valance height max. 18 inches. Area: Max. 50% of the area of the valance front. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number: 1 sign max. per each separate awning valance. Location: Shall be entirely on awning valance. 	X	P	P	
Freestanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height: Max. 48 inches. Area: Max. 12 square feet each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number: 1 per entrance or street frontage. 	p ²	X	X	
Marquee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Sign Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number: 1 sign max. Location: Allowed only in the entrance of a theater or playhouse. 	X	p ³	p ³	
Menus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: Max. 3.5 square feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Only allowed at restaurants, near the main entrance. 	X	P	P	
Menu Boards (A-frame style)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: Max. 9 square feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only displayed during regular business hours. Location: Shall be placed on private property. Location: For outdoor dining on ROW, subject to an Outdoor Dining application, Section 4.7. Materials: Plastic signs are not allowed. Signs should be constructed primarily of wood, metal, or other non-plastic material and should be artistic in nature. Creative sign design is encouraged. 	X	p ¹	p ¹	
Monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height: Max. 60 inches including base structure. Area: Max. 36 square feet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parcels within the AE zone that front Railroad Avenue with more than 100 feet of continuous street frontage; subject a Sign Review Permit. Allowed only on a site within the COR zone with more than 100 feet of continuous street frontage. 	X	p ³	P	
Murals		Subject to Section 4.5.08				
Now Playing, Movie/Theater Preview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Sign Review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Sign Review. 	X	p ³	p ³	

Table continued on the following page

SIGN TYPE	SIZE ALLOWANCE	NUMBER, LOCATION, AND MATERIALS	ZONES			
			N	AE	COR	CB
Plaque/ Placard, Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to Director approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed for sites or buildings with a historic designation. 	P	P	P	Subject to UDC 17.51.080.
Projecting or Suspended (Blade Signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Height: Max. 16 inches. Area: Max. 6 square feet. No dimension greater than 36 inches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Bottom of sign shall be no closer than 8 feet above sidewalk surface below. Materials: Sign shall be redwood sandblasted, hand carved, or architecturally designed equivalent. 	X	P	P	
Wall (AE and COR only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: 1 square-foot per linear-foot of primary business frontage. Individual letters height max. 36 inches. Any sign over 36 inches in height shall be subject to a Sign Review. Side street or rear entrance wall sign max. is 50% of the allowable primary sign area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mounting 2 feet below parapet or eave. For a single-story building: mount sign above 1st floor windows. For a multi-story building: mount sign in between windows. Number: 1 sign allowed per business frontage with pedestrian entrance. Materials: Wall signs painted directly on a building or wall, mimicking historic old town signage or that are part of an architectural theme may be permitted subject to the issuance of a Sign Review permit for Enhanced Signage. 	X	P	P	
Wall (N zone only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: Max. 12 square feet each 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number: 1 per entrance or street frontage. Location: Placement below edge of roof. 	p ²	X	X	
Window (permanent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: Max. 25% of total window area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location: Within window area. Materials: Window signage shall be limited to decals, illuminated signs, painted signs, or other similar signage approved by the Director of Community Development. Entertainment uses are exempt from these window sign provisions for events associated with their use. 	X	P	P	
Window (temporary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area: Max. 25% of total window area. Within window area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed for display a max. of 15 days at one time, up to two times in a 12-month period. One additional special event/holiday shall be permitted for up to 45 days in any 12-month period. 	X	P	P	

Footnotes:

¹ Old Town Newhall sign application is required.

² Permitted for multi-family and non-residential uses in the N Zone, but prohibited for single-family, duplex/triplex/quadplex uses in the N Zone.

³ Sign Review required.

4.5.06. NONCONFORMING SIGNS

A nonconforming sign is any permanent or temporary sign that was legally established and maintained in compliance with the provisions of all applicable laws in effect at the time of original installation but that does not now comply with the provisions of this Code.

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A nonconforming sign shall not be:

1. Changed to another nonconforming sign;
2. Structurally altered to extend its useful life;
3. Enlarged;
4. Re-established after a business is discontinued for 60 days or more; or
5. Re-established after damage or destruction to 50 percent or more of the value of the sign, or its components, as determined by the Building Official.

B. MAINTENANCE AND CHANGES

Sign copy and face changes, nonstructural modifications, and nonstructural maintenance (e.g., painting, rust removal) are allowed without a sign permit up to a maximum of 25 percent of the existing total area of the sign. Face changes not including copy, any nonstructural modifications exceeding 25 percent of the existing total area of the sign, as well as any structural changes, shall comply with all applicable standards of this Section.

4.5.07. PROHIBITED SIGNS

All sign types and sizes not expressly allowed by this Section shall be prohibited. Examples of prohibited signs include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Abandoned signs;
- B. Animated and moving signs, including electronic message display signs, and variable intensity, blinking, or flashing signs, or signs that emit a varying intensity of light or color, except time and temperature displays (which are not considered signs), and barber poles;
- C. Exposed cabinet/raceways behind channel letters;
- D. Internally illuminated cabinet (can) signs;
- E. Off-site signs (e.g., billboards, and signs mounted on vehicles);
- F. Obscene signs;
- G. Pole signs and other freestanding signs over six feet in height;
- H. Roof signs;
- I. Because of the City's compelling interest in ensuring traffic safety, signs that simulate in color, size, or design, any traffic control sign or signal, or that make use of words, symbols, or characters in a manner that interferes with, misleads, or confuses pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
- J. A sign in the form or shape of a directional arrow, or otherwise displaying a directional arrow, except as approved by the City, or as required for safety and convenience and for control of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the premises of the subject use;
- K. A sign attached to or suspended from a boat, vehicle, or other movable object that is parked within a public right-of-way,

or located on private property so that it is visible from a public right-of-way; except a sign painted directly upon, magnetically affixed to, or permanently affixed to the body or other integral part of a vehicle;

- L. A sign burned, cut, or otherwise marked on or affixed to a rock, tree, or other natural feature;
- M. A sign placed within a public right-of-way, except as provided by Section 4.5.050 (Signs Standards by Zone);
- N. A sign painted directly on property line walls, garden walls, or a building unless otherwise stated in Table 4.5-1;
- O. Temporary and portable signs, including the following;
 - 1. A-frames (unless otherwise stated in Table 4.5-1) and other portable sidewalk signs;
 - 2. Balloons and other inflatable devices;
 - 3. Flags, except official national, state, or local government, institutional or corporate flags, properly displayed; and
 - 4. Pennants and streamers, except in conjunction with a athletic event, carnival, circus, or fair.

4.5.08. MURALS/WALLPAPERING OR COVERING OF BUILDINGS

- A. Exterior building walls shall not be covered with paper, murals, or other similar material without the approval of a TUP.

- B. Murals shall be artistic in nature and not commercial, shall not bear phone numbers, website addresses, or other information that may constitute advertising or a commercial sign. Should a mural be deemed commercial in nature, the provisions of Section 4.5 (Sign Regulations) of this Code shall apply.
- C. Murals and building coverings are subject to conditions of approval to ensure that a mural or building covering is safe, structurally sound, will be maintained during the life of the artwork, and that the building will be returned to its original condition when the artwork is removed.

4.6 OUTDOOR DISPLAY STANDARDS

Outdoor display of merchandise, whether on private property or in the public right-of-way, shall be subject to the approval of the following development standards:

- 1. A retail business must be located in the Arts & Entertainment or Corridor Zones.
- 2. The display must be free and clear of all pedestrian paths of travel.
- 3. All displays must consist of decorative furniture, tables, or other display approved by the Director of Community Development.
- 4. Merchandise is limited to one (1) display per business during regular business hours.
- 5. Additional hours of display may be used while Main Street is closed to vehicles in preparation of, and during, special events.